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A REVIEW OF
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' WORK
OF THE
FRIENDS'
FOREIGN MISSION ASSOCIATION.
1866 to 1891.

THE completion of the twenty-fifth year of the Association is a fitting occasion for a short review of the progress and position of our work.

A Provisional Committee to promote the cause of Foreign Missions met in 1865; the first missionary, Rachel Metcalfe, sailing for India in 1866, and settling at Benares. In 1867, Joseph S. Sewell, accompanied by Louis and Sarah Street, commenced work in Madagascar. The Friends' Foreign Mission Association was organized in 1868. The Mission in China found a location at Chung-king in 1890, though representatives of the Association had been in the country since 1886.

Sixty-three Friends have been engaged in work abroad in connection with the Association during the quarter of a century under review. Three of these are now deceased: Rachel Metcalfe, who faithfully laboured for nearly twenty-four years in India; Susan Clemes, who accompanied her husband, Samuel Clemes, to Madagascar in 1873, and died soon after their return home in 1882; and Henrietta Green, who was for a short time in China. Eleven others have retired from the Mission-field, leaving forty-nine Friends now at work in connection with the three fields.

The Mission in INDIA was carried on successively at Benares and Jabalpur for eight years, and it was not until 1874 that the present station at Hoshangabad was commenced. Sohagpur was settled in 1881,

and Seoni Malwa in 1890. These three towns are not far apart, in the Nerbudda Valley, in the Central Provinces. For many years the Association had been desirous to enter upon Mission work in the native State of Bhopal, to the north of the Nerbudda, and in 1891 the way opened for the occupation of the important town of Sehore, in that State. Nineteen English Friends are now residing at these four stations. Besides the usual Meetings in the meeting-houses, and Gospel preaching in the bazaars, Day and Sunday Schools are in successful operation for the children, and the ladies are engaged in Zenana visiting and other work amongst the women. Dispensaries are opened at all the stations, and some who came for bodily healing have found the Lord Jesus Christ to be the Great Physician. Orphanages for boys and girls, with nearly fifty inmates, have been established at Hoshangabad. It is intended, in 1892, to commence a High School for more advanced education; also to provide Industrial Training for the orphan boys and native Christians. Camping tours amongst the villages are carried on during the cool season, and the Gospel is thus brought to many willing listeners. Some of the native Christians are doing useful work in the towns and villages as catechists, colporteurs, school teachers, and Bible-women.

The number of converts to Christianity is still only small in comparison with the great populations of the neighbourhood, but there are many evidences of blessing upon the faithful and continued testimony of those who have thus laboured for years among the great wheat-growing districts of Central India.

The Friends' Mission in MADAGASCAR was commenced shortly before a crisis in the religious history of the island, when the Queen formally adopted the Christian faith. The Friends who first went out were for a time largely engaged in educational work, but shortly after his arrival in Antananarivo, J. S. Sewell became connected with the Town Church of Ambohitantely, and in 1869, at the revision of the districts under the care of the London Missionary Society, the country lying to the south-west of the Capital was placed under the care of this Church. This district had been less influenced by the Gospel than any other portion of Imerina, and had only seven congregations, and not a single school, when it thus came under our charge. At the commencement of 1890 there were English Friends residing at Antananarivo, Arivonimamo, and Mandridrano; and, in addition to the Town Church under their care, 139 country congregations, with an ordinary attendance of about 15,000 men,

women, and children. Twenty-three English missionaries are now working in connection with our Madagascar Mission.

The Boys' School at Ambohitovo, and the Girls' School at Faravohitra, show a very satisfactory record. Whilst giving a sound education to hundreds who have passed through the schools, the religious training and Christian influence has been attended with marked result. Recent accounts tell of spiritual blessing experienced by many of these young people.

The Printing Press, established in 1872, has done good service in providing leaflets, pamphlets, school-books, hymn-books, magazines, and religious and educational works of various kinds. More than half a million were issued during the first few years, and about 45,000 are now annually published. Two monthly magazines, "The Children's Friend" and "Church and School," have a wide circulation. The Press has proved an effective helper to the School in the Christian education of the Central Province of the island.

The Medical Mission at Antananarivo was commenced by the London Missionary Society in 1862; the Hospital at Analakely, with accommodation for about 40 patients, having been opened in 1865. Between 1867 and 1876 it was carried on by Dr. Andrew Davidson, supported by his friends in Scotland. Since 1880 the Friends' Foreign Mission Association has been mainly responsible for the conduct of this important branch of the work, and the London Missionary Society has contributed a share of the annual expense. A new Hospital has been erected, to accommodate 70 patients, and was formally opened by the Queen of Madagascar in August, 1891. Out-patients still receive attention at a house on the old premises at Analakely. Dispensaries are open weekly in villages to the north and west of the Capital, and are much frequented. A fortnightly visit of medical superintendence is also paid to the leper settlement recently established at Isoavina. The teaching of medical students and the training of nurses is an important feature of the Hospital. Religious services are held with all those who attend.

A Home for Girls has been commenced, under the care of Helen Gilpin, chiefly for the daughters of native missionaries and evangelists working in distant stations who have to leave their families in the Capital.

The missionaries of our Association have from the first worked harmoniously with those of the London Missionary Society, which

entered the field more than seventy years ago. The results of their labours, and of those of other Societies, are very abundant in the central portions of Madagascar, but there are many tribes in other parts of this large island (larger than France) still enveloped in gross darkness. Even in the Central Province the evils of the drink traffic and slavery, and the low standard of morality, are painfully apparent. The progress already made calls for deep thankfulness to our Heavenly Father, and should be a strong incentive to continued diligence in carrying the Gospel to all parts of the island.

The first missionaries of this Association arrived in CHINA in 1886 with the intention of taking up Mission work in one of the Western Provinces of that great Empire. After becoming acquainted with the language, some time was spent in Han-chung, in the Province of Shen-si, and an attempt was made to settle at Tung-chuan, in the Western Province of Sz-chuan, but the prejudice against foreign residents prevented the missionaries from obtaining any place of residence.

The little band of missionaries subsequently found a home at Chung-king, a very populous river port upon the Yang-tze-kiang. The work thus begun in March, 1890, has developed in various channels. Gospel preaching has been carried on at two stations in the city, a Medical Dispensary has been opened, and a women's class and a School for girls have been commenced. There are seven English Friends now residing in Chung-king, who are thus beginning work amidst the peculiar difficulties of the China mission field. We can safely commit them and their labours to the unfailing care of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Other Friends are working under different committees in Syria, in Constantinople, and in South Africa. American Friends have entered into foreign work in Mexico, Jamaica, Alaska, Palestine, China, and Japan; they are also labouring among the Indians and coloured population nearer home.

The foregoing summary gives only a very brief outline of the work accomplished. It may fitly conclude with a hearty acknowledgment of the goodness of our Heavenly Father in permitting us to enter into His great harvest-field, and we earnestly pray for His continued blessing upon our work.

Hitchin, 1892.

(Issued by direction of the Committee of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association.)